DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 173 956 EA 011 974

AUTHOR	Decker, Virginia A., Ed.
TITLE	System-Wide Coordinators and Community Education. Role Guide Series #5.
INSTITUTION	Virginia Univ., Charlottesville. Mid-Atlantic Center for Community Education.
SPONS AGENCY	Mott (C.S.) Foundation, Flint, Mich.; Office of Education (DHEW), Washington, D.C.
PUB DATE	79
NOTE	23p.; For related documents, see EA 011 970-980
AVAILABLE FROM	Mid-Atlantic Center for Community Education, School of Education, Ruffner Hall, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, Virginia 22903 ($1.00; $8.25 for set of 11 role guides; quantity discounts)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Administrator Responsibility; *Administrator Role; *Community Education; Elementary Secondary Education; *School Community Cooperation; *School Community Relationship

ABSTRACT

This guide is the fifth in a series of eleven generated in 1978 as the result of workshops that focused on peer training, a different approach to teaching. The workshops provided the opportunity for members of eleven identified role groups to work together with peers to examine the relationship between their specific role group and community education and the ways in which they could stimulate their peers to improve role performance and effectiveness. This booklet focuses on community education as seen by systemwide coordinators--persons responsible for either all schools within a county or for the activities of several building-level coordinators. Topics considered include the responsibilities of the position concerning organization and administration, finance, the community education program, and its implementation; problems and benefits derived from the program; evaluation; and training. (Author/LD)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED173956

SYSTEM-WIDE COORDINATORS AND COMMUNITY EDUCATION

Role Guide Series #5

—University of Virginia
—University of South Carolina
—Gallaudet College
—Maryland State Dept. of Education
—Virginia Polytechnic Institute & S. U.
—West Virginia State Dept. of Education
—North Carolina State Dept. of Public Inst.
—University of Delaware

Mid Atlantic Consortium for Community Education

—West Virginia College of Graduate Studies
—Appalachian State University
—Virginia State Dept. of Education
—South Carolina State Dept. of Education
—University of Maryland
—Washington, D. C. Public Schools, Office of State Administration
—Norfolk State College
—South Carolina School for the Deaf and Blind

The Role Training Project was made possible by a grant from the U.S.O.E.--Community Education Program. The follow-up activities and publication of the Role Guide Series were made possible by grants from the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation.

Larry E. Decker, Project Director
Sharon M. Rubright, Project Assistant

Published by

Mid-Atlantic Community Education Consortium
c/o University of Virginia
School of Education - Ruffner Hall
Charlottesville, Virginia 22903

Printed by University of Virginia Printing Office
1979

Price: $1.00

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

EA 011 974

System-Wide Coordinators and Community Education

Contributing System-Wide Coordinators Role Group Members:

Harry Allen (Facilitator)
Brockton, MA

Samuel A. Blackwell
Seaford, DE

Mary Frances Bleidt
Charleston, WV

J.B. Bone
Winnsboro, SC

Brewster Brown
Powellsville, NC

Lee Bush
Gloucester, VA

Earl Catoe
Charleston, SC

Nancy Cook
Camden, SC

Sandy Davis
Annapolis, MD

Brent Delman
Newark, DE

Julie Drake
Hurt, VA

Alvin Evans
Cola, SC

Ronald Everhart
Fairmont, WV

Barbara Foster
Durham, NC

Nick Gianourakos
Charles City, VA

J.V. Walter, III
Charles Town, WV

Jo White
Reidsville, NC

Joseph P. Wray
Tryon, NC

Yvonne Hoefle
Pittsylvania, County VA

Thomas Hyder
Portsmouth, VA

Frances Inscoe
Shelby, NC

Marshall Kirtley
Winfield, WV

Mary Jane Kistler
Charlotte, NC

Al Lennert
Gloucester, VA

John H. Lucas
Princess Anne, MD

Bill McCormick
Orange County, NC

Sally Meyer
Annapolis, MD

Joseph H. Morton
Baltimore, MD

William Pollard
(Facilitator)
Washington, DC

Geraldine Randall
Charlottesville, VA

Robert Smiles
Falls Church, VA

Steve Strzemieski
Orangeburg, SC

James Turner, Jr.
Seaford, DE

Acknowledgements:

Academies Material Facilitator: Sharon M. Rubright
Technical Reviews: Mary Lou Howerton & Joseph Ringer, Jr.
Editing and Rewrite: Virginia A Decker
Typing: Ginny Alley & June Seay

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

Preface..... 5

As System-wide Coordinators, We Believe... 6

Introduction..... 7

Responsibilities of the Position..... 8

Organization and Administration..... 9
Finance.....10
Program.....10
Development and Implementation Steps.11

Evaluation.....14

Benefits and Problems.....15

Training.....18

Future Directions.....20

Bibliography.....22

PREFACE

This booklet is a result of two three-day Role Training and Peer Interaction Academies which were held in 1978 and funded by a training grant from the U.S. Office of Education, Community Education Program. The format for both Academies was designed to focus upon peer training, a method which has proven to be a useful teaching and information sharing approach. The sessions provided the opportunity for members of eleven identified role groups to work together with peers to examine in-depth:

a) the relationship between their specific role group and community education, and

b) the ways in which they could stimulate their peers to improve role performance and effectiveness.

Material development phases were interwoven with both structured and unstructured problem-solving activities. The follow-up activities and publications of the Role Guide Series were made possible from grants by the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation.

Through a sharing of information, all participants gained knowledge. The information shared in this booklet is intended for use both by experienced individuals and those just entering the field. The booklet can help the experienced individual to become more aware of additional aspects of the role and of directions being taken by others. It can assist the novice in gaining an overview of the role as seen by those who have worked in this capacity. The information also can be used as a means for guiding others in the community to gain a better understanding of the role and its relationship to community education.

AS SYSTEM-WIDE COORDINATORS, WE BELIEVE

We believe that education is a lifelong learning process.

We believe that the educational system has a responsibility to provide a life-long process for the total community.

We believe that the educational administration has a responsibility to encourage citizen input into the educational process.

We believe that administrators should develop an educational climate in all schools that encourages the involvement of a responsive and committed clientele.

We believe that people should have access to a process that can help them improve their way of life.

We believe that all social and service agencies should develop a joint planning process and work together to improve the quality of life in a community.

We believe that the role of the system-wide coordinator will be to serve as an initiator, facilitator, and motivator to develop a support base among all community agencies and organizations to serve effectively the members of the community.

INTRODUCTION

The role of a system-wide coordinator is a developing one in many communities. As the community education concept is adopted by more and more communities across the nation, there is a growing need to identify the responsibilities and functions of the role and to establish guidelines for training system-wide coordinators.

In their discussions, the participants of the system-wide coordinators group used the following definition of community education:

> Community education provides an opportunity for people to work together to achieve community and self-improvement through development of a comprehensive and coordinated delivery system for providing educational, recreational, social, and cultural services for all people in a community, which promotes the maximum use of existing resources, both human and physical.

Using this definition as a foundation for examining the system-wide coordinators' role, the participants were faced with the immediate problem of determining the answer to the question of "Who is a system-wide coordinator?" Depending on the individual community situation, a system-wide coordinator could be one person responsible for all schools within a county or political division OR one person responsible for overseeing the activities of several building-level coordinators within the county or political division. The responsibilities are somewhat different in each situation.

Another definition problem arose because the responsibilities seemed to vary according to the developmental stage of the community education

project. At different points of time and in varying situations, the system-wide coordinator was perceived to be:

a contact person	a planner
a facilitator	a staff developer
a motivator	a decision maker
an initiator	an innovator

The discussions of the participants eventually produced a general consensus regarding the responsibilities of the role in either situation and regarding both the development and implementation of community education.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE POSITION

There are recognized competencies, skills, and characteristics that must be possessed by a system-wide coordinator if he/she is to be effective in the position. In addition to knowledge, experience, and an out-going personality, other qualities which should be present were identified as:

- Leadership ability
- Communication skills
- Decision-making skills
- Inter-personal skills
- Administrative skills
- Understanding and awareness of the role and purpose of the position
- Demonstrated commitment to the community education concept

The degree to which each of the above skills and characteristics is utilized depends on varying aspects of the system-wide coordinator position.

For this reason, the participants divided the role into three major areas: organization and administration, finance, and program and examined the responsibilities of each area.

Organization and Administration

The most important responsibility identified within this area is gaining a thorough knowledge of the community. Gaining the knowledge can be accomplished through talking to community members, acquiring all available demographic data, and spending time in the community. Other responsibilities in this area include:

- Development of long and short range goals and objectives for department or program
- Development of a communication network (inter-office - intra-system - inter-agency - public)
- Development of forms/handbook/guidelines/ reporting and record keeping procedures
- Development of personnel management tools including:

  Written job descriptions
  Hiring or selection process
  Personnel goals and objectives
  Training process
  Supervision procedures
  Evaluation process
  Leadership style

- Development of citizen participation and involvement opportunities including:

  Procedure for organizing and developing advisory councils
  Procedure for recruiting and using volunteers
  Procedures for registering program participants

Finance

The budget-related responsibilities are extremely important to an accountable, fiscally-sound operation. Responsibilities include:

- Development of a process for budgeting (data gathering and presentation)
- Development of revenue sources (local, state, and federal)
- Development of expertise in grantsmanship and proposal development
- Establishment of management procedures for cash flow
- Development of procedures for assuring accountability through evaluation (program and cost analysis)

Program

The responsibilities identified by system-wide coordinators as being related to the program are:

- Development of a management process model
- Development and organization of on-going decision-making strategies
- Development of a process for program development
- Organization of an on-going needs assessment process which includes assessment of:

  Citizen needs/resources
  Own agency or institution needs/resources
  Other agency or institution needs/resources

- Development of a program evaluation process

Development and Implementation Steps

In examining the functions of a system-wide coordinator who develops and implements a community education project, the members of the role group began from the premise that although each community is unique, almost no community begins from ground-level-zero. They identified the following steps which are suggested only as keys to focus thoughts: The steps are not meant to comprise a development and implementation strategy and are not meant to be considered sequentially. The steps are:

1) Plan community awareness activities regarding community education concepts and opportunities including contacting media, planning public relations activities, and meeting with key people and groups.

2) Secure board or policy-making body approval.

3) Gain an understanding of the goals of school and/or potential partner agencies who assist in meeting community needs.

4) Plan and conduct professional and citizen needs assessment of both needs and wants and available resources to meet needs.

5) Develop plan of operation.

6) Select personnel.

7) Develop advisory and inter-agency councils.

8) Begin pilot programming.

9) Explore funding sources.

It is a well-accepted fact that community change can be a long and often slow process. Thus, it should be remembered that these steps will take a period of time to accomplish and that the order in which they are accomplished will vary depending on the community. However, several strategies were identified which have been employed to assist in implementing the steps. Listing these strategies is intended only to indicate possible approaches and not to be all inclusive. The strategies to assist implementation include:

- Research all possible sources of information: studies, surveys, city planners, census studies, system goals and objectives, history, funding sources, public attitudes.

- Develop a master plan including all activities necessary to accomplish assigned tasks.

- Gain approval of superintendent and other key administrators for plans. Study the school board and their procedures and when time is appropriate, make a presentation to the board with the superintendent's advice and help.

- Organize all forms of communication, including media (newspaper, newsletters, radio, T.V.), workshops, and public speaking at agencies or organizations and clubs.

- Plan in-depth conference workshops and visitations and use consultants to help develop skills for lay leaders and community groups.

The role group participants emphasized the importance of both formal and informal communications in implementing a community education project. They believed that establishing good communications was especially important if a system-wide coordinator was to gain the broad support base

necessary for developing and implementing a comprehensive community education project. Positive, two-way communication should be established to facilitate the development and continuation of positive support from the following groups:

School Board
In-House
Community
Administration
Agency

A number of support agencies which may be enlisted to help build a support base and to identify needs and resources of a given community also were identified including:

Cooperative Extension
Private Foundations
F.C.C. (radio)
Voter Registration
Public Libraries
Churches
United Way
Juvenile Services
Social Services
Recreation Departments
Community Action
Colleges (both community and four year)
Planning Commissions

EVALUATION

The participants of the system-wide coordinator role group recognized the need for evaluation. They believed that evaluation should indicate to what degree goals and objectives are being met and insure that the stated goals reflect the community needs. They noted that the areas of process evaluation and needs assessment present problems for many system-wide coordinators. In the process evaluation, problems arise in establishing a vehicle and a "process" for process evaluation. In the case of needs assessment, the problem is often a lack of knowledge of how to make it an on-going process which is technically sound.

In addition, other reasons considered important for conducting evaluations include:

- To improve performance of staff
- To justify future funding and establish cost effectiveness
- To modify the program as necessary
- To plan future direction and establish long and short range goals
- To insure personal feedback from staff and community
- To modify and improve the training process based on results of training sessions
- To increase public relations and awareness through dissemination of the evaluation results.

It was noted that evaluation is one area where the majority of community educators, whatever their position, have had little or no training. Because of this fact, participants indicated the belief that system-wide coordinators should accept the responsibilities of providing their staff with proper training in conducting evaluations and of making trained staff available when feasible to assist in developing assessment instruments and in conducting evaluations.

BENEFITS AND PROBLEMS

For a system-wide coordinator to make a commitment to the program and to the long and often frustrating days, there must be rewards or benfits for that individual. Members of the system-wide coordinator role group believed that they had benefited directly through increased status in the community and through recognition with the accompanying promotions and increased financial reward. The indirect benefits that were mentioned include:

- Personal growth and satisfaction
- Increased knowledge of their own community
- Reservoir of information accumulated regarding community education and other agency workings
- Travel within their region and attendance at conferences and/or conventions
- Opportunities to read proposals for funding at both the state and federal level
- Opportunities to serve as consultants for other developing programs

The majority of system-wide coordinators were based within a school system. When they were asked to compare the perceived advantages and disadvantages of both a school-based model and a jointly-

based model, the following resulted.

	Advantages	Disadvantages
school-based model	Greater and easier use of school facilities Maximum use of tax dollars More opportunities to bring community into the schools Better source of staff Better delivery system	Slow implementation Adherence to teacher salary scale Frequent lack of flexibility Lack of multi-agency involvement
Jointly-based model (school and agency)	Maximum use of services Easier to pool resources for evaluation More flexibility Politics Avoidance of duplication Broader ownership	Turfism Mixed responsibilities for accountability Too many chiefs Community education K-12 role

No program is without problems; however, no problems were regarded by the system-wide coordinators as being insurmountable if addressed in a logical and organized fashion. The major problem, and one that is mentioned most often, is that of "turf." Politics, jealousy, and special interest groups can all be included in this problem.

A strategy suggested to overcome turfism centers around the development and structuring of as many opportunities as possible for people to work together. The process of bringing agency and organization representatives together to work in a cooperative/collaborative manner is one that requires a great deal of time, ability, and insight. The process can be facilitated through joint workshops, conferences, and meetings, and social events

and by having one-to-one discussions as often as possible.

Other problems that may arise could be due to:

- Improper planning on the part of the coordinator or one of the staff.
- Communication breakdown among any of the involved persons, agencies or organizations.
- Lack of time which relates either to improper planning or an unrealistic time-frame.
- Failure to reach the target population (sociological barriers).
- Politics, which relates to the failure to identify or work within both the formal and informal power structures.
- Financial considerations related to both "soft" and "hard" money.
- Lack of support from principals, custodians, staff, and support personnel in the public school or community facility.
- Sole-planning and sponsorship of programs, activities, or related functions which should be jointly planned with other agencies.

TRAINING

There is a recognized need for training those serving as system-wide coordinators. Most training now comes from practical experience, and a system-wide coordinator is forced to function based on personal commitment and/or on the experience accumulated in prior positions. There is a need to develop training strategies which include opportunities for exchanging ideas and learning from others' experiences.

The main strategy suggested for working with and training others in the role of a system-wide coordinator centered around planning as many workshops as possible over a reasonable period of time in order to promote and facilitate an exchange of ideas. Through these sessions better role definitions should emerge which will make it easier for others in the future. Experience, involvement, and participation were the words used most often by the coordinators when considering future training strategies.

The following training format was proposed by the participants of the system-wide coordinators role group:

Purpose: To develop strategies for system-wide coordinators to improve their role performance.

1. Assessment of the role group's needs

2. Establishment of agenda: narrow task, identify priorities within the task

   a. development of goals
   b. development of objectives
   c. development of strategies
   d. development of resources
   e. development of evaluation criteria

3. Selection of specific techniques: role playing, energizers, ice breakers, sensitivity training, selection of films and tapes, awareness activities, brainstorming, resources, personalities, ongoing process evaluation, unstructured time.....

4. Implementation:

   a. Initiation (awareness)
      1. community involvement and organization (advisory councils, etc.)
      2. K-12 enrichment (volunteers, local resources, etc.)
      3. extended school day (adult education, recreation, senior citizen, etc.)
      4. interagency (council, etc.)
      5. facility use and management
      6. community development

   b. Maintenance (specific training needs and skills)
      1. time management
      2. human relations
      3. resource development
      4. program planning
      5. budgeting and finance
      6. needs assessment
      7. communications
      8. funding sources
      9. evaluation process
      10. coordination skills
      11. political relations
      12. group process

5. Formative Evaluation: Development of a process to monitor progress of activities and their effectiveness and review procedures to determine needed modifications.

6. Summative Evaluation: Development of a performance appraisal of system-wide coordinator by role group.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

The participants of the system-wide coordinators' role group were anxious to insure that the direction taken in the future would be one of moving into and involving the entire community. More interagency involvement was seen as a necessity as well as more effective community involvement. With increased interagency involvement and commitment, the system-wide coordinators anticipate that a more coordinated human service delivery system will evolve in addition to the establishment of "one-stop shopping centers" for human services.

Other directions, innovations, or changes which they would like to see occur, include:

- More involvement in K-12 programs by community members
- Increased focus on lifelong learning, vocational careers, and literacy
- Better training programs and materials for system-wide and building-level personnel
- More supportive legislation and appropriations, both state and federal

Several strategies were identified by system-wide coordinators which can influence or impact these changes. The main strategy was based on a coordinator assuming the role of a facilitator. Joint planning of projects and development of working relationships with other agencies and organizations will result in increased involvement and understanding of the community education concept by partner agencies. Increased sharing of information regarding successful programs through

local, state, and national newsletters and other publications also will help bring about changes.

Future growth also will be facilitated as system-wide coordinators become more aware of the political process and power structures under which their program operates. System-wide coordinators must accept the fact that community education has to work within the political and policy-making system if it is going to have a lasting impact on the community.

21

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Note: Reference material which specifically related to the role of system-wide coordinators is a major void in the community education literature. The following are selected general references.

Berridge, Robert I. Community Education Handbook, Pendell Publishing Co., Midland, Michigan, 1973.

Burbach, Harold J. & Decker, Larry E. Planning and Assessment in Community Education, Pendell Publishing Co., Midland, Michigan, 1977.

Decker, Larry E. & Decker, Virginia A. (eds.) Administrators' and Policy Makers' Views of Community Education, Mid-Atlantic Center for Community Education, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, Virginia, 1977.

Kaplan, Michael H. & Warden, John W. (eds.) Community Education Perspectives, Pendell Publishing Co., Midland, Michigan, 1978.

Minzey, Jack D. & LeTarte, Clyde. Community Education: From Program to Process, Pendell Publishing Co., Midland, Michigan, Revised Edition, 1979.

Ringers, Joseph Jr. Community/Schools & Interagency Programs, Pendell Publishing Co., Midland, Michigan, 1976.

Ringers, Joseph Jr. Creating Interagency Projects: School & Community Agencies. Community Collaborators, Charlottesville, Virginia, 1977.

Seay, Maurice F. & Associates. Community Education: A Developing Concept, Pendell Publishing Co., Midland, Michigan, 1977.

COMMUNITY EDUCATION ROLE GUIDE SERIES

1) Citizens
2) School Board Members
3) Superintendents
4) Principals
5) System-Wide Coordinators
6) Building Level Coordinators/Directors
7) Special Needs Population
8) Community College Representatives
9) Leisure Services Personnel
10) Cooperative Extension Agents
11) Government/Agencies Representatives

*Price: $1.00 for single copy — $8.25 for complete set of the role guide series.

*Discount on Bulk Orders::
25% off list price on orders 10-24 copies
40% off list price on orders 25 copies and over

Note: Add a 10% charge for handling and shipping. No handling and shipping charge on prepaid orders.

Make Checks Payable to "University of Virginia"

ORDER FROM:

Mid-Atlantic Center for Community Education
School of Education, Ruffner Hall
University of Virginia
Charlottesville, Virginia 22903